

W₂ASACT Meeting Minutes
December 11, 2007
Department of Natural Resources
(Hosted by Department of Environmental Quality)
Helena, MT

Members present included

Jeff Ashley	Morrison Maierle	Richard Knatterud	MDOC/TSEP
Becky Beard	BETA	Frank Kromkowski	MDOC/CDBG
Nick V. Clos	MRWS	Sandy Kust	MAP
Debra Demarais	MDOC/TSEP	Joe LaForest	MDOC/Coal Board
Rick Duncan	DNRC	Paul LaVigne	DEQ
Jim Edgcomb	MDOC/TSEP	Anna Miller	DNRC
Bob Fischer	DNRC	Jennifer Olson	MDOC/CDBG
Larry Gallagher	HUD- Field Office	Jay Sinnott	EPA
Nancy Geary	DEQ/SRF	Mark Smith	DEQ/SRF
Ellen Hanpa	MDOC/Coal Board	Pam Smith	DNRC/RRGL
Kim Hayes	MDOC/TSEP	Alice Stanley	DNRC
Pam Higgins	MAP		

Guests included

Brian Friel	US EPA Region 8
Ron Hill	US EPA Region 8

Call to Order, Sign-in Sheet, Agenda Changes

The scheduled meeting of the Water, Wastewater, and Solid Waste Action Coordinating Team (W₂ASACT) was called to order at 10:10 am, December 11, 2007.

Approval of Minutes

Minutes of the October 9, 2007 meeting were accepted as presented.

Guest Presentations

Hal Fossum, Economist Planner for the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) gave an overview of research in development at the MDT. The research aims to produce a toolkit of practical applications to help fill gaps in current practices and improve the linkage between transportation and land use decision making. The technical panel oversees the research project, reviews and refines the problem, and develops the scope of work. Requests for proposals are then put out. Consultant proposals are reviewed and a contractor selected. The technical panel reviews the interim and final products. Technical Panel Members include Hal Fossum, Panel Chair, MDT Planning; Sue Sillick, Research Project Manager, MDT; Jim Skinner, MDT Program and Policy Analysis Bureau; Andrew Finch, Sr. Transportation Planner, Great Falls; Michelle Bryan Mudd, Land Use Law Clinic, University of Montana; Tim Davis, Smart Growth; Chris Saunders, Asst. Planning Director, Bozeman; Steve Earle, Exec. Dir., Missoula Mountain Line; Jerry Grebenc, Planner, CTAP, Department of Commerce; Kelly Casillas, Legal Counsel, CTAP, Department of Commerce; and Harold Stepper, Planning Director, Jefferson County.

John Tubbs, Water Resources Division Administrator of the Department of Natural Resources made the committee aware of the issues before the Water Policy Committee concerning water rights and public water systems. A Legislative Committee is presently working on the way water rights are to be distributed. The present Department of Environmental Quality rule that allows wells producing less than 35 gallons per minute to be drilled without permitting encourages the use of individual wells rather than community water systems which affects overall water usage. Mr. Tubbs suggested water rights be added to the Uniform Application Environmental checklist. A summary of the presentation is attached to these minutes.

Items for Review and Discussion

Updates from subcommittees

Workshops –Spring workshops will be based on the application process. The first one will be February 20th in Great Falls in conjunction with the Rural Water Conference. The second one is scheduled at the Holiday Inn in Missoula on March 5th and the third one will be at the Crowne Plaza in Billings on March 11. The subcommittee will discuss having a 4th workshop in Eastern Montana when they meet.

Uniform Application – Jim Edgcomb reported that the Uniform Application is complete. Two hundred copies have been printed for the upcoming workshops. The user-friendly electronic version of the Application will be delayed until a new program assistant is on board with the Treasure State Endowment Program.

Website – Pam Smith announced that the website committee will meet as soon as Department of Natural Resources website has been completely updated as they host the W₂ASACT page.

Updates on Ongoing Topics

Emergency Projects - Richard Knatterud reported that Powell County has contacted TSEP about an emergency re-decking of a bridge on the Beck Hill road. Bob Fischer reported that the temporary water line under the railroad tracks in Brockton that must be replaced is on hold waiting for a permit from the railroad to work under their tracks. The Burlington Northern Railroad is requiring the upgrade as failure would cause the town of Brockton to be without water, as well as disruption of rail service. The Department of Natural Resources and the Treasure State Endowment Program emergency funds have each provided \$30,000 and a special assistance grant through the Governor's Office provided \$24,000.

Tribal Issues – Jay Sinnott reported that the Rocky Boy Reservation has identified several projects that could be funded with EPA funds and will meet with them soon. Richard Knatterud announced he will attend the pre-construction meeting for the Crow Tribe sewer interceptor. Morrison-Maierle, Inc. is the engineer for that project.

Regional Water Projects – Rick Duncan reviewed the following projects:

Fort Peck - Dry Prairie

Construction is continuing on the clear wells and washwater recovery basin facilities at the Fort Peck Tribes' water treatment plant (WTP). Apollo Construction is working on modifying its work schedule – with approximately 20% of the contract work complete, 40% of the total contract period has passed. There is a meeting scheduled for Dec. 13th in the Wolf Point-Poplar area for Reclamation, the Tribes and Apollo to discuss the proposed modifications. Over 800 cubic

yards have been poured/pumped thus far, and forms are in place for hundreds more. More than 430 cubic yards of concrete were pumped into place between 6 AM and midnight on Wednesday, Dec. 5th. Teams have built extensive tents over the forms. The construction schedule calls for pouring nearly 5,000 cubic yards of concrete by October 1, 2008.

Dry Prairie's plans to construct water mains in southern Valley County remain on hold. The City of Glasgow's previous indication that they would supply up to 400,000 gpd for the first phase of this project now appears to have been premature, and the City Council seems intent on a delay of unknown length of time in bringing the matter to a vote. Glasgow officials are basing their opposition to Dry Prairie's and/or Boeing/MARCO's use of the raw water pipeline supplying water from the Missouri on a 20-year-old report from Morrison-Maierle. The Dry Prairie Board and its engineers plan to request some clarifications and updates on that information from Morrison-Maierle.

Final details of agreements are being worked out with Boeing Corporation concerning purchase of water from the MARCO water system, as well as with Basin Electric for receiving water through Dry Prairie from the plant at Culbertson for a facility designed to convert natural gas to electricity. The latter project will begin construction in the autumn of 2008.

The Dry Prairie Board has obtained property within the city limits of Culbertson as a location for an O&M facility. They are now working with an architectural firm as to final design details. Construction will begin as early as possible in the spring of 2008.

Plans for an upgrade to the Culbertson WTP are moving forward, for both the installation of the 3rd filter bay and upgrading raw water pumps at the Missouri River intake location.

Rocky Boy – North Central

Hill County Water District is proceeding with construction activities on its plan to upgrade and utilize its Marias River area infiltration gallery and intake as an interim source. An agreement with DEQ stipulates that they must abandon use of the Fresno Reservoir source by the end of this month.

North Central Regional Water Authority is fine-tuning proposals on its "Interim Service Scenarios" to identify those communities/systems in greatest need of interim solutions to their drinking water supply problems. With this work nearly complete, the committee will take the proposals to the next quarterly authority meeting in Shelby in January for a vote.

Central Montana

The Central Montana Regional Water Authority voted at its November monthly board meeting to use the name "The Musselshell-Judith Rural Water Supply" project, partly in an effort to give it name recognition separate from any other regional water project.

The Authority will meet in Broadview on Wednesday, December 12.

Dry-Redwater

Plans to introduce authorization legislation in the 110th Congress are moving ahead; the Montana Electric Cooperatives' Association has voted to support the allocation of Pick-Sloan power, as Senator Baucus' office had requested.

The Authority and its engineering firm have selected a qualified environmental consulting firm for the purpose of conducting and compiling baseline environmental and wetlands studies of the portions of the project extending from the intake to the WTP, and from the WTP to the Town of Circle. Some of the needed research work will continue through the winter, with field work in the spring and summer of 2008.

W₂ASACT Project Tracking Sheet - Jim Edgcomb reported that the tracking sheet has been updated on-line. Rural Development and SRF-water still need to send in updates. Please send them to Jim at jedgcomb@mt.gov by February 6, 2008.

Army Corps of Engineers – Section 595 Program and Projects – Pam Smith reported that WRDA did pass and is operating on the continuing resolution. Five million dollars has been authorized but is not appropriated.

Program Updates

Jim Edgcomb introduced Debra Demarais as the new Treasure State Endowment Program Specialist. He also reported that Lisa Huff, Program Assistant recently resigned to accept her dream job. Kim Hayes said that contracts are getting done and out and she is thankful that Debra has joined the Program.

Jennifer Olson reported that the Upper-Lower River Road project (Great Falls) interlocal agreements are being worked out and that bids have been awarded for the project.

Anna Miller indicated that the Revolving Loan Fund is very busy.

Becky Beard reported on the projects that her firm (BETA) has been working on. Projects in Conrad and Pablo have been completed.

Nick Clos reminded everyone of the Rural Water Conference in Great Falls beginning February 21, 2008. Please contact Nick for booths and registration information.

Gus Byrom told the group about a recent meeting held to discuss the development of a long-range plan for affordable workforce housing in Montana.

Other Issues

Todd Teegarden, Bureau Chief of the Technical and Financial Assistance Bureau of the Department of Environmental Quality was named the W₂ASACT chairperson for the next two years.

Richard Knatterud suggested the possibility of meeting quarterly instead of bi-monthly. The suggestion will be put on the next agenda for discussion.

Logistics of next meeting

The next meeting will be held February 12, 2008 at the Department of Commerce Building, 301 South Park Avenue in the Treasure State Conference Room located on the lower floor of the building.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m.